

What is claimed is:

1. A musical instrument comprising:  
a plurality of strings tuned in an ascending sequence,  
a plurality of pluckers, each of said pluckers being associated with a different one of said plurality of strings and being adapted to pluck said string at a range of plucking frequencies, and  
control means for selectably controlling the frequency with which said pluckers pluck said strings.
2. The instrument of claim 1 wherein said sequence is a chromatic sequence.
3. The instrument of claim 1 wherein said plurality of strings comprise metal strings.
4. The instrument of claim 3 wherein said plurality of strings comprise a first plurality of electric bass guitar strings and a second plurality of electric guitar strings.
5. The instrument of claim 4 wherein said first plurality of electric bass guitar strings comprises  
at least one electric bass guitar string having an open-string tuning of E,  
at least one electric bass guitar string having an open-string tuning of A,  
at least one electric bass guitar string having an open-string tuning of D, and  
at least one electric bass guitar string having an open-string tuning of G,  
and wherein said second plurality of electric guitar strings comprises  
at least one electric guitar string having an open-string tuning of E,  
at least one electric guitar string having an open-string tuning of A,  
at least one electric guitar string having an open-string tuning of D,  
at least one electric guitar string having an open-string tuning of G,  
at least one electric guitar string having an open-string tuning of B, and

at least one electric guitar string having an open-string tuning of E,  
the octaves of the open-string tunings of said electric guitar strings v) and x)  
being different.

6. The instrument of claim 5 further comprising a baseboard having a first plurality of frets corresponding to the frets of an electric base guitar and a second plurality of frets corresponding to the frets of an electric guitar.
7. The instrument of claim 6 wherein the pitch of each of said plurality of electric bass guitar strings is set by contacting said string with a corresponding fret of said first plurality of frets and wherein the pitch of each of said plurality of electric guitar strings is set by contacting said string with a corresponding fret of said second plurality of frets
8. The instrument of claim 7 wherein said chromatic sequence spans the interval between the open E string of an electric bass guitar and the twenty-second fret of the second E string of an electric guitar.
9. The instrument of claim 1 wherein each of said pluckers comprises an actuator and a plectrum which is activated by said actuator and which plucks said string associated with said plucker.
10. The instrument of claim 1 wherein said control means comprises a first processor that provides an activating signal to said pluckers and a selector having a plurality of positions each corresponding to a different plucking frequency.
11. The instrument of claim 10 wherein said selector is selected from the group consisting of a pedal, a dial, a slider and a switch having a plurality of discrete positions.

12. The instrument of claim 1 wherein said first processor of said control means provides an output that is specified by the position of said selector and that causes said plucker to pluck its associated string at a frequency specified at least in part by said position of said selector when said plucker is activated.
13. The instrument of claim 12 wherein said first processor further includes means for enabling a user to specify the plucking frequency corresponding to one or more positions of said selector.
14. The instrument of claim 1 further comprising a sounding box within which said plurality of strings is mounted.
15. The instrument of claim 3 further comprising a plurality of pick-ups, wherein each of said plurality of strings is associated with at least one of said plurality of pick-ups and each of said plurality of pick-ups is responsive to at least one of said plurality of strings.
16. The instrument of claim 15 further comprising means for electrical communication between said plurality of pick-ups and an external amplifier.
17. The instrument of claim 15 further comprising an amplifier in electrical communication with said plurality of pick-ups.
18. The instrument of claim 1 further comprising means for activating said pluckers.
19. The instrument of claim 18 wherein said means for activating said pluckers comprises a plurality of keys, each of said plurality of pluckers being activated by at least one of said keys.

20. The instrument of claim 18 wherein said plurality of keys comprises a first plurality of keys arranged in a keyboard, each of said first plurality of keys activating a plucker corresponding to one of said plurality of strings.

21. The instrument of claim 20 wherein at least a portion of said first plurality of keys activates two pluckers, said pluckers corresponding to strings differing in pitch by a predetermined tonic interval.

22. The instrument of claim 21 further comprising means for selectively specifying said predetermined tonic interval.

23. The instrument of claim 18 wherein said plurality of keys comprises a second plurality of keys each of which simultaneously activates a plurality of pluckers.

24. The instrument of claim 23 further comprising means for selectively controlling the frequency at which each of said plurality of simultaneously activated pluckers plucks said string associated therewith.

25. The instrument of claim 1 further comprising:  
a second plurality of strings tuned in an ascending sequence,  
a second plurality of pluckers, each of said pluckers being associated with a different one of said second plurality of strings and being adapted to pluck said string at a range of frequencies, and  
control means for selectably controlling the frequency with which said second pluckers pluck said second strings.

26. The instrument of claim 25 wherein said second plurality of strings comprise strings formed from materials different from the materials used in forming the corresponding strings of said first plurality of strings.

27. The instrument of claim 1 further comprising:  
a second plurality of strings tuned in an ascending sequence,  
a plurality of hammers, each of said hammers being associated with a different  
one of said second plurality of strings, and  
means for activating each of said plurality of hammers to strike said string of  
said second plurality of strings associated therewith.
28. The instrument of claim 15 further comprising means for producing at least  
one sound effect selected from the group consisting of reverb, fuzz, wah-wah and  
damping.
29. The instrument of claim 15 further comprising means for selectively specifying  
the volume of the tone produced by at least one plucked string.
30. The instrument of claim 1 further comprising a capo bar adapted to extend  
across at least a portion of said plurality of strings.
31. The instrument of claim 1 further comprising programmable means for  
sequentially activating a plurality of said pluckers.
32. A musical instrument comprising:  
a plurality of strings tuned in a chromatic sequence,  
a plurality of pluckers, each of said pluckers being associated with a different  
one of said plurality of strings and being adapted to pluck said string at a  
range of frequencies,  
activating means for activating each of said plurality of pluckers, and  
control means for selectably controlling the frequency with which said pluckers  
pluck said strings upon activation of said pluckers.

33. The instrument of claim 32 wherein said activating means c) comprise a plurality of keys.

34. The instrument of claim 32 further comprising a baseboard comprising a plurality of frets.

35. The instrument of claim 34 wherein the pitch of each of said plurality of strings is set by contacting said string with a corresponding fret of said plurality of frets.